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Agenda item 136

Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Felipe **García Landa** (Mexico)

I. Introduction

1. The previous recommendations made by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly under agenda item 136 are set out in the report of the Committee contained in document A/72/681 and Corr.1 and Corr.2.

2. The Fifth Committee resumed its consideration of the item at its 31st, 32nd and 34th meetings, on 15, 16 and 29 March 2018. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.[1]

3. For its further consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Standards of accommodation for air travel

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/716)

Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/72/7/Add.44)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Review of air travel policies in the United Nations system: achieving efficiency gains and cost savings and enhancing harmonization" (A/72/629)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting his comments and those of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Review of air travel policies in the United Nations system: achieving efficiency gains and cost savings and enhancing harmonization" (A/72/629/Add.1)

[1] A/C.5/72/SR.31, A/C.5/72/SR.32 and A/C.5/72/SR.34

Please recycle

Proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General on the update on the proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/72/720)

Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/72/7/Add.45)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/141 (A/71/218 and A/71/218/Corr.1)

Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/71/584)

Review of the experience of the utilization of the contingency fund

Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/395)

Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/70/7/Add.7)

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/72/L.28

4. At its 34th meeting, on 29 March, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019" (A/C.5/72/L.28), submitted by the Chair of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representatives of Estonia and South Africa.

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/72/L.28 without a vote (see para. 6).

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

6. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

The General Assembly,

I
Standards of accommodation for air travel

Recalling its resolutions 37/240 of 21 December 1982 and 42/214 of 21 December 1987, section IV, paragraph 14, of its resolution 53/214 of 18 December 1998, section XV of its resolution 62/238 of 22 December 2007, section II of its resolution 63/268 of 7 April 2009, section IV of its resolution 65/268 of 4 April 2011, section VI of its resolution 67/254 A of 12 April 2013, section IV of its resolution 69/274 A of 2 April 2015 and section VI of its resolution 71/272 B of 6 April 2017, as well as its decision 57/589 of 18 June 2003,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the standards of accommodation for air travel[1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2]

Having also considered the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Review of air travel policies in the United Nations system: achieving efficiency gains and cost savings and enhancing harmonization"[3] and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting his comments and those of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination thereon,[4]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[1]

2. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2] subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

3. *Recalls* its resolution 71/272 B, regrets that the Secretary-General did not submit a comprehensive report on standards of accommodation for air travel, and requests him to submit such a report to the General Assembly at the first part of its resumed seventy-third session;

4. *Expresses concern* at the low rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy directive in all travel categories, recalls paragraph 4 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and requests the Secretary-General to make stronger efforts to further enhance the rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy directive across all travel categories, in particular in the official travel category, taking into account the patterns and nature of official travel and the reasons for non-compliance by each department, office and field mission;

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[1] A/72/716.
[2] A/72/7/Add.44.
[3] A/72/629.
[4] A/72/629/Add.1.

5. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to include the advance purchase of tickets as a key performance indicator in regular managerial and departmental performance evaluations, taking into account the specificity of departments;

6. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to hold managers accountable for the judicious use of travel resources, in particular by increasingly encouraging the use of alternative methods of communication and representation and by giving primary consideration to authorizing official travel only where direct face-to-face contact is necessary for mandate implementation;

7. *Takes note* of paragraph 8 of the report of the Advisory Committee;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to monitor industry best practices in the area of frequent flyer miles and to report to the General Assembly on any new trends for making use of frequent flyer miles to improve the administration of travel;

9. *Takes note* of paragraph 12 of the report of the Advisory Committee;

10. *Notes* the decrease in the use of the lump-sum option;

11. *Takes note* of paragraph 17 of the report of the Advisory Committee;

12. *Decides* to reinstate travel days and to maintain the 70 per cent lump-sum payment;

13. *Looks forward* to the results of the comprehensive analysis by the Secretary-General of the implementation of the lump-sum payments option, including collection and analysis of Umoja travel information, as well as the rate of acceptance of the lump-sum option by staff, to be presented to the General Assembly for consideration during its seventy-third session;

14. *Recalls* paragraph 20 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and decides to eliminate the use of first-class travel of United Nations staff members for their official travel;

15. *Encourages* non-staff members entitled to travel first class, with the exception of representatives of least developed countries, to voluntarily downgrade to the class immediately below;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include, in his report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, an analysis and recommendations concerning a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members) that should, in most years, be expected to maximize the use of limited travel budgets;

17. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to encourage the voluntary use of economy- and premium economy-class travel instead of business class wherever possible;

18. *Decides* that the changes set out in the present resolution shall not affect the current standards of accommodation for air travel and daily subsistence allowance of members of organs and/or subsidiary organs, committees, councils and commissions of the United Nations;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to limit the use of exceptions, to strengthen internal controls in this regard and to report thereon in his next report on standards of accommodation for air travel;

20. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the procurement process for all air travel management services contracts is conducted in full compliance with general procurement principles as set out in financial regulation 5.12, namely, (a) best

value for money; (b) fairness, integrity and transparency; (c) effective international competition; and (d) the interest of the United Nations,[5] and to ensure that the procurement process includes the option of awarding a contract to multiple vendors to allow for greater competition among selected vendors;

21. *Encourages* the International Civil Service Commission to assess system-wide standards of accommodation for air travel and to present relevant recommendations to the General Assembly;

II
Proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights[6] and the related reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[7]

Requests the Secretary-General to consider submitting a report, in line with established rules and procedures, to the General Assembly for consideration at its seventy-fourth session, on a proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, if necessary.

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[5] See ST/SGB/2013/4.

[6] A/71/218, A/71/218/Corr.1 and A/72/720.

[7] A/71/584 and A/72/7/Add.45.